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ABSTRACT

Designed to aid educators in organizing and conducting evaluation programs for local vocational and technical education, this pamphlet discusses ten steps on guidelines to be used in the procedures. In the order of their use, they are: (1) contacting the state vocational education department, (2) deciding how much to evaluate, (3) selecting the evaluating team, (4) deciding what to evaluate, (5) orientating the evaluation team, (6) providing materials for the evaluation team, (7) collecting and recording information, (8) reporting the results, (9) utilizing the results, and (10) writing the followup report to the evaluation team. Selected references provide a more in-depth treatment of the subject.
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A GUIDE FOR LOCAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

ERIC

Clearinghouse on Vocational
and Technical Education

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A GUIDE FOR LOCAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

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The Center's mission is to strengthen the capacity of state educational systems to provide effective occupational education programs consistent with individual needs and manpower requirements by:

- Conducting research and development to fill voids in existing knowledge and to develop methods for applying knowledge.
- Programmatic focus on state leadership development, vocational teacher education, curriculum, vocational choice and adjustment.
- Stimulating and strengthening the capacity of other agencies and institutions to create durable solutions to significant problems.
- Providing a national information storage, retrieval and dissemination system for vocational and technical education through the affiliated ERIC Clearinghouse.

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FOREWORD

As the demand for accountability in education has increased, educators have searched for improved means by which to evaluate their programs. This publication is designed to aid educators in organizing and conducting evaluation programs for vocational and technical education. The author identifies ten steps or guidelines to serve as a skeletal structure in determining evaluation procedures, evaluation committee organization, and the collection and utilization of data. An accompanying bibliography provides a list of original sources for the reader wishing a more in-depth treatment of the subject.

The profession is indebted to Richard Edsall for his scholarship in the preparation of his report. Recognition is also due John Klit, Illinois Division of Vocational-Technical Education; and Ronald W. Stadt, Southern Illinois University; for their critical review of the manuscript prior to final revision and publication. Wesley E. Budke, Assistant Director for Information Utilization at The Center, coordinated the publication and development and Alice J. Brown provided the technical editing.

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INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet is designed to assist local superintendents, principals, vocational directors, program supervisors, and teachers in organizing and conducting an evaluation of a local vocational program by utilizing a specifically selected evaluation committee. This evaluation committee is assembled, conducts the evaluation in a short period of time, reports their findings and recommendations and is disbanded. The organization and use of this committee complements the evaluation efforts of teachers, administrators, and local program advisory committees and provides additional management information for use in updating and improving the vocational program.

The guidelines in this pamphlet are designed to serve as a foundation to which local administrators and teachers can add their own ideas and innovations to obtain the greatest benefits from the efforts of the evaluation team.

STEP ONE

Contact Your State Vocational Education Department

For efficiency and effectiveness in conducting this effort, the local administrator should contact the evaluation section of his state department of vocational education. Local and state evaluation efforts must be complementary. Data gathered during the process should be of benefit to all levels of the education system for efficient management and decision-making. Also, special expertise, technical assistance, detailed guides and procedures are often available in the state department for use by the local school officials.

If there is no evaluation section within the state department, the program operations, program supervision, or similar sections can often provide some assistance with the evaluation.

Person to contact in state department:

Name		

Address		

City	State	Zip

Telephone		

STEP TWO

How Much to Evaluate

The decision about how much of the local program offering to evaluate should be made by the local administrator in consultation with his staff. If many different programs are offered, consideration must be given to the amount of time and resources that can be given to the evaluation effort. Assessing only a few of the programs gives the advantage of having transfer effects to programs not evaluated. Evaluating all programs offers the opportunity for comparison.

Evaluating a few different programs annually and, at selected intervals (perhaps five years) evaluating all programs during the same year, is one suggested method.

Program(s) to be evaluated:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

STEP THREE

Selecting the Evaluation Team

Bringing in a special evaluation team can add a new perspective to the program review, and new ideas for program improvement can result. An evaluation team specifically selected for their knowledge and expertise in one area can give an in-depth perspective to that program. A group with expertise in several areas should be selected if only one committee is to evaluate several programs or an entire school offering.

The number of persons to be selected on the committee will vary with the scope of the task. Three to five persons are probably sufficient for a single program. Ten to fifteen persons on a team should be sufficient to evaluate most total school offerings. The selection of evaluation committee members is very important. Byram (1965) includes the following in some suggested criteria for selection:

Knowledge of the program area - including skill requirements and employment needs.

Interest in the program.

Judgment ability.

Communication ability.

Willingness to serve.

Potential sources for team members include:

- 1) Employers (or potential employers) of students from the program.
- 2) Former students from the program.
- 3) Parents of students in the program.
- 4) Vocational teachers from the same or similar programs in other schools.
- 5) Representatives from the teacher training staff for that program.
- 6) Representatives of the state supervisory staff.
- 7) Students in the program.

STEP FOUR

What to Evaluate

The evaluation team can review as many different aspects of the selected program(s) as time and resources allow. The specific areas to be examined should be selected by the local administrator, or by the evaluation team in consultation with the administrative staff.

<u>PROGRAM ELEMENTS</u>	<u>SELECTED FOR REVIEW</u>
Purposes and Objectives	_____
Administration	_____
Facilities	_____
Curriculum (Materials)	_____
Instruction (Methods)	_____
Student Activities (Youth Organizations)	_____
Advisory Committees	_____
Community Relations	_____
Staff (Abilities and Qualifications)	_____
Guidance, Placement and Follow-Up	_____
Program Evaluation	_____

STEP FIVE

Orientation of Evaluation Team

After the team members have been contacted and have agreed to serve, the local administrator should set a convenient meeting time and place. At this meeting, an orientation is essential. The local administrator should present the purpose of the evaluation and the duties and responsibilities of the members. Suggested items for the orientation are:

- 1) Purposes of the evaluation, including:
 - a. Determining strengths and weaknesses of the program.
 - b. Assisting the teacher in appraising the effectiveness of his activities.
 - c. Providing school officials with decision-making information necessary for program improvement.
- 2) Philosophy of the school and the program.
- 3) Admission requirements.
- 4) Review of program objectives stated in terms of:
 - a. The learner.
 - b. The change in behavior desired.
 - c. Areas of concern relative to each objective.
- 5) Specific elements of the program to be evaluated.
- 6) Collection of data and other information needed for assessment.
- 7) Specific organization for the evaluation including:
 - a. Organization of the committee - appointment of chairman.
 - b. Appointment of subcommittees.
 - c. Selection of times and places for interim meetings.
 - d. Arrangements for class visitations.
 - e. Arrangements for interviews with teachers and students.
- 8) Procedures for reporting including:
 - a. Development of conclusions.
 - b. Development of recommendations.
 - c. Production of the final report.

STEP SIX

Provide Materials for the Evaluation Team

Make arrangements for comfortable and convenient meeting rooms. Work materials including instruments for data collection, guides for reviewing selected items, paper, and pencils should be provided. A secretary should be assigned to type necessary reports. A technical writer should be assigned to assist in preparing the final report.

Secretary _____

Writer _____

Supply Items	Number Needed
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

STEP SEVEN

Information Collection and Recording

The collection of evaluative information should focus on quantitative and qualitative measures relating to the program objectives. Emphasis should be given to items or facts which will aid in improving the quality of the program.

Many evaluation instruments are available. It is not the purpose of this guide to produce yet another one. While the quality of the available instruments varies, none have value if they are not utilized. With any instrument, evaluation team members must be given maximum flexibility and encouraged to utilize their own expertise in assessing the program. Comprehensive forms, unless utilized carefully, can overstructure the evaluation process.

State vocational education departments often have instruments available for use by local agencies. Step One in this guide serves the purpose of securing the instruments and/or technical assistance. If Step One is not completed or if instruments and assistance are not available, alternative sources exist. An evaluation guide focusing on program objectives can be developed locally. This guide should be kept simple and be designed to provide direction to the evaluation team. The guide should contain:

- 1) A statement of purpose or objective for each specific aspect of the program to be reviewed.
- 2) Suggested facts and figures relating to each statement.
- 3) Selected trends and projections for each statement.
- 4) Suggested methods of arriving at conclusions and recommendations.

Other possible sources of instruments include:

- 1) Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC).
- 2) Research Coordinating Units.
- 3) College and University files of doctoral dissertations and master theses or reports.
- 4) Regional Accrediting Agencies.
- 5) State Accrediting Agencies.

The "Selected References" contain but a few of the many useful instruments and guides that have been developed. The publications followed by an ED number are generally available through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). Requests for the others should be made to the listed address.

STEP EIGHT

Reporting the Results

The evaluating team should make an oral report. The audience for this oral report could include the teaching and administrative staffs, and members of both the governing board and advisory committee. This oral report will provide clarification of questionable points.

A written report should also be submitted. At this point, an effective writer can be a valuable aide to the evaluation team, putting into written form their conclusions and recommendations. The following is a suggested format for the report.

- 1) Introduction - General description of the evaluation activity including:
 - a. Items evaluated.
 - b. Basic limitations of the evaluation effort.
- 2) Conclusions relating to each item evaluated.
- 3) Specific recommendations for improvement or solutions to identified problems.
- 4) Summary of the report and overall assessment.
- 5) Appendix - Data collected and other information pertinent to the report but not listed elsewhere.

STEP NINE

Utilizing the Results

This step should be obvious. After the oral report has been presented and copies of the written report have been received and distributed to appropriate persons, the recommendations should be carefully reviewed. Procedures for implementing the recommendations should be developed. Exact implementation of every suggestion may not be practical or desirable, but steps should be taken to benefit from the time, efforts, and ideas contributed by the evaluation team. Because the team was charged to present their ideas for improving the program, they will have produced a number of useful suggestions.

STEP TEN

Follow-Up Report to the Evaluation Team

One month after the completion of the evaluation, a follow-up report should be sent to the members of the evaluation team. This should be a valuable public relations tool. Most team members will be interested in the outcome of their recommendations. A brief report to each team member should stimulate his interest in your programs and aid in securing his assistance in future activities. A similar report can be utilized for release to public information media.

Suggested items to include in the report follow:

- 1) Appreciation for team members' participation.
- 2) Report of action planned, underway, and/or completed on the recommendations.

SELECTED REFERENCES¹

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Vocational Technical Program Approval: Evaluative Criteria. Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Curriculum Development and Evaluation, P.O. Box 911, Harrisburg, PA 17126. 1970.

¹Bibliographical entries followed by an ED number are generally available in hard copy or microfiche through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). This availability is indicated by the abbreviations MF for microfiche and HC for hard copy. Order from ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Drawer O, Bethesda, Maryland 20014. Payment must accompany orders totaling less than \$10.00.